



"Actually, the Chancellor originally fixed it for DECEMBER 25th"

GEORGE GALE

Revealed: The real face of Moscow's mean men

THE Russian bear turns momentarily away from mauling Afghanistan and snarls at the West. It is in an ugly mood. It savages one of its own. Red in tooth and claw, it shows its true nature.

The Kremlin men recognise brute force. Might is right for them, whether imposing their will upon a country through tanks, or punishing one of their own citizens with internal exile to Gorky, a town closed to Westerners.

By arresting Dr Andrei Sakharov they have demonstrated, as brutally and forcibly as they can, their contempt for the West. It is an act of teeth-baring defiance. With hackles bristling the bear spits at the West.

Dr Sakharov is one of Russia's most distinguished men, a scientist laden with honours, a nuclear physicist who developed the Soviet Union's H-bomb, and a humanitarian who won the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts in seeking to make the face of Russian Communism acceptably humane.

As Russia's leading dissident he was well disposed towards the West, in that he defended human rights and asserted the freedom of speech.

As a scientist, he knew the value of free dissemination of knowledge.

Seizure

The men in the Kremlin are the same who determined the invasion of Afghanistan, who sent the tanks into Czechoslovakia in 1968 and into Hungary in 1956.

They calculated that the seizure of Afghanistan was worth much more to them than the temporary anger of the West. They now calculate that the crushing of dissidence within the Soviet Union is worth a great howl of outrage from the West.

The West, which has not, will not and cannot go to war because of the Russian aggression against Afghanistan, cannot effectively protect or assist brave men like Sakharov. Diplomats' protests are idle gestures. There is little to be done. But what can be done should be done.

Since there is no Dr Sakharov, or any of his friends, to talk to, scientific exchanges and cultural exchange should cease. (The BBC could make a useful contribution by halting its pro-Soviet teach-yourself Russian propaganda series).

And any lingering doubts about the Moscow Olympics should be finally dispelled. It is absolutely clear that the Games should not be held in Moscow.

By banishing Sakharov, the Kremlin seeks to bury Russian dissidence. Every competitor in Moscow will be dancing on the grave of dissidents.

Time to get back to the 5p pint?

AND WAGES
OF £10 A WEEK

MILLIONAIRE Gordon McNally was calmly prepared yesterday to have his £20,000-a-year salary slashed by 90 per cent—provided the rest of us do the same.

And he would not wince either if his two exotic homes, worth a combined £200,000, went on the market for a mere £10,000 each.

For this 55-year-old grandfather reckons he has the key to restoring the value of the pound in our pockets and boosting Britain's financial morale.

It appears to be devastatingly simple. "Our currency," he said, "should be revalued and everything should be divided by 10. £10 would be worth £1, £1 would be worth 10p, and 50p would be worth 5p."

Overdraft

The result? You could buy the Daily Express for a penny, a pint of beer for 5p. And a £5-50 supermarket bill would drop to 55p. A gallon of petrol would be priced at around 12p. A £200 overdraft would fall to £20, and instead of millionaires, there would be thousandaires.

Of course, we would have to invent a new coin, equal to one-tenth of a penny, for small items like a box of matches to go with a 6p packet of cigarettes.

Says McNally: "It would bring back reality to money and make us think carefully again. At the moment, we hand out £1 notes like Mickey Mouse paper while coins heap up in our purses and pockets."

Mr McNally, who runs a travel and leisure empire with a turnover of £35 million from Hastings, Sussex, lives in a windmill in nearby Battle during the week, and an Elizabethan house in Hert-



Clifford and Sybil... "trouble is, it's all in the mind"

By ADELLA
LITHMAN

fordshire, with 13 acres at the weekends.

But his life has not always been so luxurious. Forty years ago he started his career as a shipping clerk on a salary of £1-a-week. "We have got to get back to those basics," he insisted, "when a five-shilling rise meant something, and when a penny could buy four ounces of sweets."

At the National Westminster Bank headquarters, Mr David Kern, manager of the economics analysis section, gave his personal opinion: "Well, the French did it in 1960—redefining their currency. Their old 100 Franc became one new Franc. But there is no evidence that the improvement in the French economy is in any major way linked to this change."

Inflation

"It is an entirely psychological change. It would be nice to have a situation where a newspaper cost one penny, but it would not reduce inflation."

Under the McNally scheme, Laurence Sanders, a 30-year-old economist with one of Britain's building societies, would earn £10-a-week.

He said: "There would have to be a Grand Day appointed when everything

was written down by 10 in this country—like mortgages, liquid assets, reserves, properties and interest.

"It would be a huge, costly exercise in administering the change—and there would have to be an organisation to stop profiteering from the revaluation."

How would Britain's nine and a half million old age pensioners react to yet another change in the currency after the experience of the country going decimal?

Pensions

At Are Concern, the National Old People's Welfare Council, Claire Booker threw up her hands in horror: "Those who suffer from loss of memory or confusion would pick up a £1 note and not realise that it was worth £10. They might even think their pensions had been taken away from them."

Pulling pints at the Poppinjay, one of Fleet Street's pubs, manager Clifford Goodall thought that a 5p pint would make any man feel better.

He and his wife, Sybil, would be earning £13 under the McNally system—and they both agreed: "Fancy going out to a restaurant and having a meal which did not even come to a pound note. Now that's terrific."

"Trouble is, it's all in the mind. At the end of the day, when you count up you're still in the same position."

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